Royal National Lifeboat Institution

Founded 4th March 1824
Supported by voluntary contributions

Charter of Incorporation
Granted by Her Majesty Queen Victoria on 24th April 1860

Supplemental Charter of 1932
Granted by His Majesty King George V on 2nd May 1932

Supplemental Charter of 1986
Granted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 24th April 1986
Including Amendments Allowed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 11th February 1998, 16th July 2002 and 1st November 2011,

Bye-Laws

ROYAL NATIONAL LIFEBOAT INSTITUTION
West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ
ROYAL NATIONAL LIFEBOAT INSTITUTION

For the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck

Charter of Incorporation

Victoria, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, To all to whom these Presents shall come Greeting.

Whereas the late SIR WILLIAM HILLARY, baronet, the late MR THOMAS WILSON, Member of Parliament, and others of Our loving subjects, did, in the year 1824, establish a Society by the name of "THE ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK", and which title was altered in 1854, and the said Society is now designated "THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION, for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck", and of which Society We have become Patron.

And Whereas it has been represented to Us, that the same Society has since its establishment sedulously pursued such its proposed object by establishing efficient Life-boats on the points of the Coasts of the United Kingdom most exposed to Shipwreck, and organizing and training crews ready to man the Boats at all times in case of Wreck, and by granting pecuniary Rewards to the persons who man the Life-boats or otherwise assist in saving life from Shipwreck, and by conferring honorary Gold and Silver Medals for distinguished Gallantry in such service.

And Whereas the same Society is supported by Annual Subscriptions and Donations, and other Contributions to its Funds, and has a funded property of £14,114 1s. 7d £3 per Cent Reduced Bank Annuities.

And Whereas in order to secure the property of the said Society, to extend its operations, and to place it on a more permanent basis, We have been besought to grant to ALGERNON PERCY DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and a Vice-Admiral in our Royal Navy, President; The Vice-Chancellor SIR WILLIAM PAGE WOOD, Knight, Vice- President; THOMAS BARING, Member of Parliament, Chairman; THOMAS CHAPMAN, Deputy-Chairman; SIR EDWARD GEORGE LAMBERT PERROTT, Baronet; JOHN BUNCHE BONNEMAISON M'HARDY, a Rear-Admiral in our Royal Navy; JOHN WASHINGTON, Captain in our Royal Navy, and Hydrographer of the Admiralty; MONTAGUE GORE; WILLIAM HENRY HARTON; and GEORGE PALMER, Governors of the said Society, and to those who now are or shall hereafter become Governors of the said Society, Our Royal Charter of Incorporation, for the purposes aforesaid: Now know ye that We, being desirous of encouraging a design so laudable and benevolent, of Our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, have willed, granted, and declared and Do by these Presents for Us, Our Heirs, and Successors, will, grant, and declare that the said ALGERNON PERCY DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and a Vice-Admiral in our Royal Navy; The Vice-Chancellor SIR WILLIAM PAGE WOOD; THOMAS BARING; THOMAS CHAPMAN; SIR EDWARD GEORGE LAMBERT PERROTT, BARONET; JOHN BUNCHE BONNEMAISON M' HARDY; JOHN WASHINGTON; MONTAGUE GORE; WILLIAM HENRY HARTON; and GEORGE PALMER, and such other of Our Loving subjects as now are or shall hereafter come Governors of the said Society, according to such Regulations or Bye-Laws as shall be hereafter framed or enacted; and their successors shall, for ever hereafter be, by virtue of these Presents, one body politic and corporate by the name of "THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION, for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck", and for the purposes aforesaid, and by the name aforesaid, shall have perpetual succession and a Common Seal, with full power and authority to alter, vary, break, and renew the same at their discretion: and by the same name to sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, answer and be answered unto, in every Court of Us, Our Heirs and Successors, and be for ever able and capable in the Law to purchase, receive, possess, hold and enjoy to them and their successors, any goods and chattels whatsoever, and as well those now belonging to the said Society as those which may be hereafter acquired, and also to be able and capable in the Law (not withstanding the Statutes of Mortmain) to take, purchase, hold, and enjoy to them and their successors, a Hall or House, and any such messages, lands, tenements, or hereditaments whatsoever as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Society, and as well those now belonging to the said

* The foregoing are the names of those Governors of the Institution whose names were appended to the Petition to Her Majesty in Council to grant it a Chart of Incorporation.
Society as those which may be hereafter acquired, the yearly value of which, including the site of the said Hall or House, shall not exceed in the whole the sum of £2000, computing the same respectively at the rack-rent which might have been had or gotten for the same respectively at the time of the purchase or acquisition thereof; and to act in all the concerns of the said body politic and corporate as effectually, to all intents and purposes, as any other of Our Liege subjects, or any other body politic or corporate in Our said Kingdom, not being under any disability, might do in their respective concerns.

And We do hereby grant Our especial licence and authority unto all and every person and persons, bodies politic and corporate, otherwise competent, to grant, sell, alien, and convey in mortmain unto and to the use of the said body politic and corporate, and their successors, any messuages, lands, tenements, or hereditaments, not exceeding such annual value as aforesaid.

And Our will and pleasure is, and we further grant and declare that there shall be a General Meeting or General Meetings of the Governors of the said Society, to be held from time to time as hereinafter mentioned, and that there shall be a Committee of Management to direct and manage the concerns of the said body politic and corporate, and that the General Meetings and the Committee of Management shall have the entire direction and management of the same in the manner and subject to the regulations hereinafter mentioned.

And We do hereby also will, grant, and declare, that there shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, Secretary, and Inspector of life-boats of the said body politic and corporate, and that the Committee of Management shall consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, and Treasurer, and not more than 40, nor less than 15 other Governors of the said Society.

And We do hereby further will and declare, that the said ALGERNON PERCY DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND shall be the first President of the said body politic and corporate, and the other persons now being the Vice-Presidents, and Treasurer, together with those of the Governors now constituting the Committee of Management, shall be the first Members of the Committee of Management, and shall continue such until the election of officers shall be made in pursuance of these Presents.

And We do hereby further will and declare that RICHARD LEWIS shall be the first Secretary of the said body politic and corporate, and JOHN ROSS WARD, Captain of Our Royal Navy, shall be the first Inspector of Life-boats of the said body politic and corporate, subject in each case to the power of removal hereinafter given to the Committee of Management.

And We do hereby further will and declare that it shall be lawful for the Governors of the said body politic and corporate hereby established, to hold General Meetings for the purposes, hereinafter mentioned, namely, That the President, Vice-Presidents, and the Treasurer, and other members of the Committee of Management, shall be chosen at Such General Meeting, and that the General Meeting shall from time to time make and establish such Bye-Laws, and vary and alter or revoke the same as they shall deem to be useful and necessary for the regulation of the said body politic and corporate, and for fixing the number of Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and Officers, and for the management of the proceedings and the estates, goods, and business of the said body politic and corporate, so that such Bye-Laws be not repugnant to these Presents or to the Laws and Statutes of this Our Realm, and shall and may also enter into any resolution, and make any regulation respecting the affairs of the said body politic and corporate that may be necessary and proper.

And We do further will and declare that a General Meeting shall be held at least once between the 1st day of January in every year and the 1st day of January in the next year ensuing; and all General Meetings shall take place at such time as may be fixed by the said Committee of Management, and that the present Regulations of the said Society, so far as they are not inconsistent with these Presents, shall continue in force until the same shall be altered by a General Meeting.

And We further will, grant, and declare that, notwithstanding anything herein contained, the Committee of Management shall have the sole management of the income and funds of the said body politic and corporate, and the power to appoint and remove the Secretary and Life-boat Inspector, and such other officers, attendants, and servants as the Committee of Management shall think necessary or useful, as also the entire management and superintendence of all the other affairs of the said Society, and shall and may, but not inconsistently with or contrary to the provisions of this Our Charter or any existing Bye-Law or Laws, or the Laws and Statutes of this Our Realm, do all such acts and deeds as shall appear to them necessary for carrying into effect the objects and views of the said body politic and corporate.

Provided always and We do will and declare that the Committee of Management shall, from time to time, and at least once in each year, render to a General Meeting a full account of their proceedings,
and that every Governor of the Society may, at all reasonable times, to be fixed by the said Council, see and examine the accounts of the receipts and payments of the said body politic and corporate.

And We do further will, grant, and declare that no sale mortgage, encumbrance, or other disposition of any messuages, lands, tenements, or hereditaments belonging to the said body politic and corporate, shall be made except with the approbation and concurrence of a General Meeting.

And We do further will and declare that it shall be lawful for the Committee of Management of the said Society, with the approbation and concurrence of a General Meeting, from time to time, to appoint any persons to be Trustees of any part of the property of the said body politic and corporate, and to make, or direct to be made, any Conveyance or transfer to such Trustees.

In Witness whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent. Witness Ourself at, Our Palace at Westminster, this 24th day of April, in the Twenty-third year of our Reign.

By Her Majesty’s Command,
Edmunds
George the fifth, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

Whereas Her Late Most Excellent Majesty Queen Victoria did in the year 1860 grant a Charter of Incorporation to THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE FROM SHIPWRECK and thereby willed granted and declared that this Institution should be for ever able and capable in the law (notwithstanding the Statutes of Mortmain) to take purchase hold and enjoy to them and their successors a Hall or House and any such messuages lands tenements or hereditaments whatsoever as might be necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Institution and as well those then belonging to the said Institution as those which might be thereafter acquired, the yearly value of which including the site of the said Hall or House should not exceed in the whole the sum of £2,000 computing the same respectively at the rack rent which might have been had or gotten for the same respectively at the time of the purpose of acquisition thereof And also that the Committee of Management of the said Institution should have the power to grant pecuniary rewards to the persons who should man the lifeboats or otherwise assist in saving life from shipwreck and to confer honorary gold and silver medals for distinguished gallantry in such services

And also that no sale or other disposition of any messuages lands tenements or hereditaments belonging to the Institution should be made except with the approbation and concurrence of a General Meeting of the Governors of the said Institution

Now know ye that We being satisfied that it is to the interest of the Institution that its power should be extended in the manner hereinafter mentioned

Do by these Presents for Us Our Heirs and Successors will grant and declare that the power of the Institution to hold land may be extended and that they be for ever able and capable in the Law (notwithstanding the Statutes of Mortmain) to take purchase hold and enjoy to them and their successors any such messuages lands tenements or hereditaments whatsoever as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Institution and as well those now belonging to the Institution as those which may be hereafter acquired the yearly value of which, including the site of the Institution’s Hall or House, shall not exceed in the whole the sum of £10,000 computing the same at the rack rent which might have been had or gotten for the same respectively at the time of the purchase or acquisition thereof. Also that the Committee of Management of the Institution shall have power to grant pecuniary rewards not only to the persons who man the lifeboats or otherwise assist in saving life from Shipwrec but also to any persons who use a life-boat or any other boat for the purpose of rescuing the lives of those in danger from any cause on or near the coasts of the British Islands and Ireland or otherwise assist towards the same ends and of conferring any medals or other honorary awards for distinguished gallantry in any such services

Also that the Committee of Management shall be at liberty to sell or otherwise dispose of any messuages lands tenements or hereditaments belonging to the Institution which they shall consider no longer to be required for the purposes thereof and it shall not be necessary for the said Committee of Management to obtain the approbation or concurrence of a General Meeting of the Governors of the Institution in respect of any such sale or disposition

In Witness whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent

Witness Ourself at Westminster the Second day of May in the twenty-second year of Our Reign.

By Warrant under the King’s Sign Manual

Schuster.
Elizabeth the second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Our other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith: To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

Whereas Her Majesty Queen Victoria by Royal Charter dated the twenty-fourth day of April in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and sixty (hereinafter referred to as “The Original Charter”) constituted a body corporate and politic under the name of “The Royal National Life-Boat Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck” (hereinafter referred to as “the Institution”).

And whereas His Majesty King George the Fifth by a Supplemental Royal Charter dated the second day of May in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and thirty-two (hereinafter referred to as “the Supplemental Charter of 1932”) extended the powers of the Institution:

And whereas an humble Petition has been presented unto Us by the Institution praying that We should be graciously pleased to grant to it a further Supplemental Charter:

Now therefore know ye that We having taken the said Petition into Our Royal Consideration have of Our especial grace, certain knowledge and mere motion granted and declared and do by these Presents for Us, Our Heirs and Successors grant and declare as follows:

1 Except insofar as it incorporates the Institution (which shall be known as “The Royal National Lifeboat Institution”) and confers upon it perpetual succession and authorises it to have a Common Seal and to sue and be sued, the Original Charter and the Supplemental Charter of 1932 are hereby revoked, but nothing in this revocation shall affect the legality or validity of any act, deed or thing lawfully done or executed under the provisions thereof.

2 The members of the Institution shall continue to be one body politic and corporate with perpetual succession and a Common Seal with power to alter, vary, break or renew the said Seal from time to time at their will and pleasure, and with full power and capacity by and in such name to sue and be sued in all Courts and in all manner of actions and suits and shall, subject to the provisions of this Our Supplemental Charter, have power to do all other matters and things incidental or appertaining to a body corporate.

3 The object of the Institution (“the Object”) shall be to save lives at sea and on inland and flood waters. In order to achieve the Object, the powers of the Institution shall without limitation include the following:-

3.1 to promote safety and provide relief from disaster at sea and on inland and flood waters;

3.2 to advance the education of the public in matters relating to safety at sea and on inland and flood waters and in the history and heritage of the Institution;

3.3 to promote the efficiency of rescue services at sea and on inland and flood waters; and

3.4 to relieve and assist those who have been involved in saving lives at sea and on inland and flood waters in any capacity, and who are in need of such relief or assistance by reason of poverty, disability, infirmity or otherwise, and their dependants.

4 The work of the Institution shall be primarily but not exclusively carried out in and around the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands and the Republic of Ireland.

5 The Institution shall have the following powers with regard to its funds:

5.1 To deposit or invest its funds not immediately required for its purposes in or upon such investments, securities, or property as may be thought fit, in its absolute discretion, with power to vary or transpose the same or any of them for or into others of any nature;

5.2 To establish trading and other subsidiary companies and entities;

5.3 To delegate the management of cash and investments to one or more financial experts;
5.4 To appoint and remunerate as nominee or custodian for the purpose of holding funds, investments or documents, any corporation which is controlled either by the Institution or by a financial expert acting on its instructions.

In this Article ‘financial expert’ means an individual, firm or company who the Board of Trustees reasonably believe to be competent to advise the Institution as to matters relating to investment.

6 The income and property of the Institution shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the Object and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend or bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the Governors or the members of the Board of Trustees: provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the holding and investment of income which may be surplus to immediate requirements, or the payment in good faith of:

6.1 out of pocket expenses necessarily and lawfully incurred by members of the Board of Trustees in the interests of the Institution, or
6.2 reasonable and proper remuneration and expenses lawfully due to any Governor, officer or servant of the Institution who is not also a member of the Board of Trustees, or
6.3 pensions to former employees of the Institution or their dependants, or
6.4 interest at a reasonable rate on money borrowed for the purposes of the Institution from any member of the Board of Trustees, or
6.5 reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let to the Institution by any member of the Board of Trustees, or
6.6 the premium of any indemnity insurance to cover the liability of members of the Board of Trustees or any other officers (other than the auditors) in connection with the costs of a successful defence to a criminal prosecution brought against them as charity trustees or otherwise, or personal liability incurred in respect of any act or omission which is or is alleged to be negligence or a breach of trust or breach of duty, unless the person concerned knew (or must reasonably be assumed to have known) that, or was reckless whether the act or omission was a breach of trust or breach of duty; or
6.7 fees remuneration or other benefit to any company of which a member of the Board of Trustees is a member holding no more than 1% of the issued share capital; or
6.8 fees remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth if the payment or benefit complies with any condition set out in the Bye-Laws; or
6.9 fees remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth which has been previously and expressly authorised in advance and in writing by the Charity Commission and any procedures prescribed by the said Charity Commission are fully adhered to.

7 The members of the Institution, who shall be known collectively as Governors, shall comprise:

7.1 Governors and Life Governors, who shall be such persons as subscribe to the funds of the Institution such sums as may from time to time be prescribed in the Bye-Laws; and
7.2 Honorary Life Governors and Ex-officio Governors, who shall be such persons as may be elected, or holders of offices as may be designated from time to time, in accordance with the Bye-Laws.

8 Subject to the provisions of this Our Supplemental Charter government and control of the Institution and the management of the Institution's affairs shall be vested in and the responsibility of the Board of Trustees of the Institution.
8.1 The Board of Trustees shall be appointed and its business conducted in such manner as may be prescribed by or in accordance with the Bye-Laws. The Board of Trustees may from time to time delegate any of its powers or any particular aspect of the Institution's business to one or more committees of the Board of Trustees constituted and conducted as the Board of Trustees sees fit, subject to the provisions of this our Supplemental Charter and to the Bye-Laws.

8.2 There shall be a general committee called the Council whose purpose shall be to advise and assist the Board of Trustees on broad policy and strategy issues and external relations, and carry out such functions as may be required under the Bye-Laws or by the Board of Trustees. There shall also be Advisory Committees whose purpose shall be to advise and support the Board of Trustees on matters of a specialist or technical nature. The Council and Advisory Committees shall be appointed and their business conducted in such manner as may be prescribed by or in accordance with the Bye-Laws.

8.3 The Board of Trustees shall appoint from its own number its Chairman who shall be the Chairman of the Institution, and may appoint a Deputy Chairman or Deputy Chairmen, a Vice-Chairman, the Treasurer and such other officers as it thinks fit, upon such terms as it shall decide.

9 There shall be the following Honorary Officers of the Institution, the method and terms of whose appointments shall, subject to the provisions of this paragraph, be prescribed in the Bye-Laws:

9.1.1 A President appointed from amongst the Vice-Presidents by the Board of Trustees; and

9.1.2 An unlimited number of Vice-Presidents appointed by the Board of Trustees from amongst the Governors as a mark of special recognition of service to the Institution.

10 An Annual General Meeting of the Institution shall be held once in every calendar year at such time and place and to conduct such business as shall be prescribed by and in accordance with the Bye-Laws. Other General Meetings of the Institution may be held from time to time as shall be prescribed by and in accordance with the Bye-Laws.

11 Subject to the provisions of this Our Supplemental Charter, the Institution may from time to time make, adopt, revoke, amend or add to Bye-Laws of the Institution by resolution of the Board of Trustees followed by a resolution passed by a majority of not less than three fourths of the Governors present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or at any other General Meeting duly convened for that purpose. Provided that no new Bye-Law and no such alteration, addition or repeal as aforesaid shall have any force or effect if it be repugnant to any of the provisions of this Our Supplemental Charter or to the Laws of Our Realm and further provided that any such revocation, amendment, or addition has been authorised as required by the relevant authorities in any jurisdiction in which the Institution is registered as a charity and the Irish Revenue Commissioners.

12 No member of the Board of Trustees or officer of the Institution shall be liable for the acts, neglects or default of any other member of the Board of Trustees or officer of the Institution, or for any loss or expense happening to the Institution. Nor shall any member of the Board of Trustees or officer of the Institution be liable for any loss or deficiency or damages arising out of the negligence or bankruptcy or tortious act of any person, or for any loss or damage occasioned by any error or misfortune whatever which shall happen in the execution of the duties of the office of member of the Board of Trustees or officer of the Institution, or in relation thereto, unless the same shall happen through the dishonesty or wilful default of such member or officer.

13 There may be a Patron of the Institution, being such person as the Board of Trustees may decide, but We being Patron of the Institution as heretofore constituted reserve unto Ourselves during Our pleasure the office of Patron of the Institution.
14 The Institution may, by a resolution passed by not less than three-fourths of the Governors present and voting at a General Meeting of which not less than twenty-one clear days' notice in writing has been given, revoke, amend or add to any of the remaining provisions of the Original Charter, the Supplemental Charter of 1932 and this Our Supplemental Charter and any further Supplemental Charter, and such revocation, amendment or addition shall, when allowed by Us, Our Heirs or Successors in Council, become effectual so that the Original Charter, the Supplemental Charter of 1932 and this Our Supplemental Charter and any further Supplemental Charter shall thenceforward continue and operate as though they had been originally granted as revoked, amended or added to in the manner aforesaid. This provision shall apply to the Original Charter, the Supplemental Charter of 1932 and this Our Supplemental Charter and any further Supplemental Charter as revoked, amended or added to as aforesaid. Provided that no such revocation, amendment or addition shall be made which would cause the Institution to cease to be a charity in English law and further provided that any such revocation, amendment, or addition has been authorised as required by the relevant authorities in any jurisdiction in which the Institution is registered as a charity and the Irish Revenue Commissioners.

15 The Institution may by resolution passed by not less than three fourths of the Governors present and voting at a General Meeting of which not less than twenty-one clear days' notice in writing has been given, determine to surrender this Our Supplemental Charter subject to the sanction of Us, Our Heirs or Successors in Council and upon such terms as we or they may consider fit and wind up or otherwise deal with the affairs of the Institution in such manner as shall be determined by such resolution or in default of such direction, as the Board of Trustees shall think expedient and if, on the winding up or dissolution of the Institution there shall remain, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid or distributed among the Governors or any of them but shall, subject to any special trusts affecting the same, be given and transferred to some charitable association or associations having objects similar to the Object set out in Article 3 of this Our Supplemental Charter, and prohibiting the distribution of its or their income or property amongst its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the Institution by this Our Supplemental Charter, such association or associations to be determined by the Board of Trustees at or before the time of dissolution, and if and so far as effect cannot be given to such provision, then to some other charitable object. For these purposes the term "charitable" means charitable in accordance with the law of England and Wales, provided that it will not include any purpose which is not charitable in accordance with any statutory provisions regarding the meaning of the word "charitable" or the words "charitable purposes" in force in any part of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

16 And lastly We do by these Presents for Us, Our Heirs and Successors grant and declare that these Our Letters shall be in all things valid and effectual in law, according to the true interest and meaning thereof, and shall be taken, construed and adjudged in the most favourable and beneficial sense for the best advantage of the Institution, as well as in Our Courts of Record as elsewhere, by all Judges, Justices, Officers, Ministers and other subjects whatsoever of Us, Our Heirs and Successors, any non-recital or other omission, defect or thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

In witness whereof we have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent.

Witness Ourself at Westminster the 24th day of April in the thirty-fifth year of Our Reign.

By Warrant under the Queen's sign Manual.

Oulton